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Call for Participation -- Study of Virtual Reference Services

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OSTI's Information Bridge – Updated

No sooner was an article about OSTI's *Information Bridge* submitted for the November 2005 *SciTech News* than new features were added to the public access version.

Those features include the ability to "mark" records of interest for further manipulation, including the ability to download the selected records to Endnote, and the ability to set-up "alerts". In addition, from within a bibliographic record, selecting the hot-linked "author name" provides a listing of additional documents by the same author.

For additional information, see Stoecker, N.K., "OSTI's Information Bridge – Easy Access to Scientific & Technical Information Continues", *SciTech News*, November 2005.❖

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Call for Participation – Study of Virtual Reference Services

Dear Colleague:

Greetings! We are writing to invite you to participate in a research study of virtual reference services (VRS).

Please consider participating in this project if you currently provide VRS in health-related information settings or you are associated with VRS systems in one of the following:

- an academic biomedical/health sciences library
- a hospital library
- a special bio-health-related library
- a VRS system with health-related services

The purposes of the study are: 1) to identify the required VRS knowledge and skills for health-related information services, 2) to integrate them into the LIS curriculum, and 3) to disseminate the results so as to promote the improvement of VRS education, continuing education, and professional development provided in LIS programs.

The data collection involves surveying information professionals who currently provide VRS in health-related information settings and the personnel associated with VRS systems. Questionnaires in Microsoft Word format will be sent to participants via email and will be returned

the same way. The questionnaire is designed for ease of response and will take little of your time. The researchers will send each participant a report of the findings.

The PI is Dr. Feili Tu, Assistant Professor of the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina (SLIS/USC). The CO-PI is Nancy Zimmerman, PH.D., Associate Professor of the SLIS/USC. Two SLIS graduate students, Julie Boller and Mary Kristen Jeffcoat, are serving as the support staff in this research.

We would be deeply appreciative if you would participate in this study and we look forward to hearing from you. Please contact Dr. Feili Tu at tuf@gwm.sc.edu to participate. Your contributions will make a difference to our study and our profession. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Feili Tu, Ph.D.
Nancy Zimmerman, Ph.D.

[Ed note: This solicitation was originally received in the Fall of last year but was inadvertently omitted from the November and February issues. However, the study is ongoing and is still soliciting participants] ❖